

1 Samuel 9 - Thursday, November 21st, 2013

- By way of introduction to this chapter, we need the back-story to sort of hit the ground running as we see God giving them their demands.
- More specifically, the demanding of a king to rule them as a monarchy, and in so doing, rejecting of their God to rule them as a theocracy.
- This because, they wanted to be like the other nations who had a man as their king so he would judge them and fight their battles for them.

- Even after Samuel warns them six times, (the number of man), this king reigning over them will be taking from them, they still demand it.
- We brought chapter eight to an end on a very sad note with Israel getting their fleshly cravings, but with it, God sent leanness to their souls.
- Enter chapter nine, where we're introduced to Saul, Israel's first king, who in all fairness, starts out good, however, ends up being very bad.

- (1) There was a man of Benjamin whose name *was* Kish the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. (2) And he had a choice and handsome son whose name *was* Saul. *There was* not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward *he was* taller than any of the people.
- Here we're told that Saul was, tall, handsome, and very wealthy so much so outwardly he was the most handsome man among all of Israel.
 - That's what we're told, but notice what we're not told; nowhere does it say anything about Saul, or his family for that matter, being godly.
 - In other words, Saul had it all, by man's standard of looking at the outward appearance, but not by God's standards Who looks at the heart.

Charles Spurgeon commenting on verse two in the King James Version, which reads, "Saul, a choice young man, and goodly..." says, "It would have been better had he been godly as well."

- There's one more thing I want to point out before we move on to verse three having to do with the name being the nature concerning Saul.
- Saul means, requested of God or asked of God, if you prefer. The reason I point this out is that Israel is getting exactly what they asked for.
- You've heard it said, be careful what you ask for, because you just may get what you ask for, only to realize, you wish you wouldn't have.

(3) Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul, "Please take one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." (4) So he passed through the mountains of Ephraim and through the land of Shalisha, but they did not find *them*. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, and *they were* not *there*. Then he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find *them*. (5) When they had come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who *was* with him, "Come, let us return, lest my father cease *caring* about the donkeys and become worried about us."

- I find this interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is, God is leading Saul to Samuel by orchestrating these circumstances.
- He leads Saul using donkey's, which comes as no surprise given that God can make a donkey both talk to man, and walk away from man.
- I say that to say this, never underestimate what God may be doing, or where He may be leading, using circumstances that seem nebulous.

Charles Spurgeon - "It is important for us to learn that the smallest trifles are as much arranged by the God of providence as the most startling events. He who counts the stars has also numbered the hairs of our heads."

- Isn't it true that, often times, God may choose to use something as meaningless as a donkey to speak to us or, that He might also lead us?
- We do err greatly when we fail to recognize that something as insignificant as lost donkey's may be the leading and the calling of the Lord.
- That's not to say we go to the opposite extreme and read too much into everything that happens in our lives as having some great purpose.

- I'll take it a step further and suggest that we're more prone to do the latter, such that we take "everything happens is for a reason" too far.
- While it is true that nothing happens by accident, we shouldn't assume that this means everything that happens is for some profound end.
- This is where Christian's can get into trouble, and as such, they make life decisions solely on how they've interpreted their circumstances.

(6) And he said to him, "Look now, *there is* in this city a man of God, and *he is* an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go." (7) Then Saul said to his servant, "But look, *if* we go, what shall we bring the man? For the bread in our vessels is all gone, and *there is* no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?" (8) And the servant answered Saul again and said, "Look, I have here at hand one-fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give *that* to the man of God, to tell us our way." (9) (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the seer"; for *he who is* now *called* a prophet was formerly called a seer.) (10) Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God *was*. (11) As they went up the hill to the city, they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?" (12) And they answered them and said, "Yes, there he is, just ahead of you. Hurry now; for today he came to this city, because there is a sacrifice of the people today on the high place. (13) As soon as you come into the city, you will surely find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him." (14) So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place.

- Couple of thoughts here, the first of which has to do with the two servants telling Saul they should go to the man of God, known as a seer.
- It's interesting to note that they don't want to hear what God would speak to them rather, they want to hear where to find their donkey's.
- You probably know where I'm going with this, so suffice it to say, we are the same way; we only have ears to hear what we want to hear.

Charles Spurgeon - "They came to the man of God about donkey's, and learned something concerning a kingdom, and so many go to hear preachers out of idle curiosity, but God leads them into the kingdom of His dear Son. ...Saul went out to seek his father's donkey's, he failed in the search, but he found a crown."

- Actually, there's an irony in all of this, and it comes by way of a contrast between this first king of Israel, Saul, and the second king, David.
- Here's what I'm thinking, when Saul is anointed king he's seeking lost donkeys, when David is anointed king he's feeding pastured sheep.
- The reason I highlight this contrast is that David had a shepherd's heart and a heart after God's own heart, because God looks at the heart.

- Perhaps you'll indulge me just a bit, as I paint more contrasts between Saul and David using the canvass of both their lives as Israel's King.

SAUL	DAVID
Saul was man's king	David was God's king
Saul was appointed because Israel rejected God	David was appointed because God rejected Saul
Saul was chosen for his outward appearance	David was chosen for his heart
Saul was after man's praise	David had a heart after God's own heart
Saul was cruel	David was kind and benevolent
Saul was bitter and resentful	David was forgiving
Saul was unrepentant when confronted	David was repentant when confronted
Saul was fearful	David was courageous
Saul disobeyed God's commands	David obeyed God's commands
Saul was proud	David was humble
Saul sought to kill David if he had the chance	David refused to kill Saul when he did have the chance
Saul would end up separated from God	David would end up at peace with God
Saul died in battle	David died of old age
Saul's kingship ended	David's kingship would be eternal through Jesus Christ

- To me, King Saul represents the first birth, and King David represents the second birth; we must be born again in order to have eternal life.

(15) Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying, (16) "Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me." (17) So when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, "There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people."

- We have here, woven into the fabric of these verses, a perfect picture of two spiritual gifts, the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom.
- A word of knowledge is a fact God reveals that you could not otherwise know, and a word of wisdom is what you do with that knowledge.
- The word of knowledge is the fact that Saul is coming to see Samuel, and the word of wisdom is what he's to do is anoint him as the king.

(18) Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Please tell me, where *is* the seer's house?" (19) Samuel answered Saul and said, "I *am* the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that *is* in your heart. (20) But as for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be anxious about them, for they have been found. And on whom *is* all the desire of Israel? *Is it* not on you and on all your father's house?"

- It's interesting to note that Samuel tells Saul not to worry about the donkeys because they had been found. Saul never told him about that.
- Here again, we have a word of knowledge, the donkeys have been found, and the word of wisdom, you don't need to be worried about it.
- I can't help but think Saul is quickly coming to the realization that Samuel as the man of God has something bigger than donkeys from God.

(21) And Saul answered and said, "Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak like this to me?" (22) Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there *were* about thirty persons. (23) And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave you, of which I said to you, 'Set it apart.' " (24) So the cook took up the thigh with its upper part and set *it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, "Here it is, what was kept back. *It* was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people." So Saul ate with Samuel that day. (25) When they had come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* spoke with Saul on the top of the house. (26) They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, "Get up, that I may send you on your way." And Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel. (27) As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us." And he went on. "But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God."

- So, the chapter comes to an end with the custom of eating a meal together on the flat roof, which was like a deck on the top of the house.
- Then, early the next morning, Samuel sends Saul's servants on ahead so he can speak the Word of God into Saul's life before he goes.
- I'll close on this one point because in it, there's a valuable lesson. Early in the morning, rise up and seek Him before you go about your day.

Psalms 63:1 KJV A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

Psalms 5:1-3 KJV To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David. Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation. (2) Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. (3) My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.